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Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 (ISO) W
----------047032 251232Z /17
O P 251012Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9303
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 3151

EXDIS

DAKAR FOR ASST SECY MOOSE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, ET, SU, TZ
SUBJECT: ETHIOPIA: NYERERE'S COMMENTS

1. SUMMARY: PRESIDENT NYERERE IS STILL ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN EFFORT MEDIATE SUDAN-ETHIOPIA DIFFICULTIES AND IS RELATIVELY OPTIMISTIC THAT ERITREAN PROBLEM CAN BE HANDLED BY NEGOTIATION--AFTER THE ETHIOPIANS HAVE WON A FEW VICTORIES. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING HOUR'S DISCUSSION NIGHT OF JULY 24 OF EVENTS DURING HIS TRIP TO KHARTOUM, PRESIDENT NYERERE SAID THAT HIS MAJOR INTEREST IN GOING TO THE OAU SUMMIT HAD REMAINED AN EFFORT TO GET A SOLUTION TO THE ETHIOPIA-SUDAN PROBLEM. HE HAD TALKED AT LENGTH TO NIMEIRI IN KHARTOUM AND HAD COME AWAY CONVINCED
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THAT THE SUDANESE PRESIDENT DID NOT AFTER ALL WANT ERITREAN SECESSION BUT RATHER A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT.

3. SO DID EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT SADAT WITH WHOM NYERERE HAD ALSO HAD A LONG CONVERSATION. INDEED, SADAT HAD SAID THAT HE HAD TOLD SIAD BARRE THAT AS FAR AS EGYPT WAS CONCERNED, THERE WOULD NEVER BE ANOTHER OGADEN. SADAT HAD FURTHER ASSURED NYERERE

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THAT THE MISSILE TECHNICIANS HE HAD SENT TO SOMALIA WERE
FOR DEFENSE ONLY.

4. ARMED WITH SADAT AND NIMEIRI'S VIEWS, NYERERE HAD CONSIDERED
THE ERITREAN PROBLEM IN DETAIL WITH MENGISTU IN ADDIS ABABA. HBU
HAD TOLD THE ETHIOPIAN LEDER THAT HE (NYERERE) HAD PAVED THE WAY
FOR SETTLEMENT ON THE DIPLOMATIC FRONT BY CLARIFYING THE SUDANESE
AND EGYPTIAN POSITIONS AND BY SEEING TO IT THAT THE OAU DID NOT
ENDORSE ERITREAN SECESSION. THE NEXT STEP WAS TO GET THE
INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO APPROVE THIS POSITION. THE ETHIOPIANS
MUST THEN SIT DOWN AND TALK WITH THE ERITREANS.

5. THE ETHIOPIAN LEADERSHIP HAD ACCEPTED THIS. MENGISTU HAD
AGREED WITH NYERERE THAT ERITREA WAS NOT THE SAME AS THE OGADEN.
MENGISTU HAD ALSO ADMITTED THAT THE RUSSIANS, EAST GERMANS, AND
SOUTH YEMENIS WERE NO LONGER PREPARED TO GIVE HIM FULL SUPPORT
FOR MILITARY SUPPRESSION. (NYERERE NOTED PARENTHETICALLY THAT
HE SUSPECTED THE USSR WAS INTERESTED IN MAKING POINTS FOR ITSELF
BY ENCOURAGING PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT AS THE US HAD DONE IN
NAMIBIA.) IN GENERAL, MENGISTU HAD STRUCK NYERERE AS MUCH
STRONGER AND MORE SELF-CONFIDENT THAN WHEN NYERERE HAD LAST
SEEN HIM. HE NOW MADE HIS OWN DECISIONS, ALONE OR IN COMPANY,
AND NO LONGER LOOKED AROUND FOR CONFIRMATION FROM HIS COLLEAGUES.

6. HOWEVER, NYERERE EMPHASIZED, HE AGREED WITH A REMARK THAT
HAD BEEN MADE TO HIM BY THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR IN ADDIS: I.E.,
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THAT MENGISTU WOULD PROBABLY NOT REALLY BE WILLING TO TALK TO
THE ERITREANS UNTIL HE HAD A FEW VICTORIES OVER THEM. THE WEST
SHOULD BEAR THIS IN MIND AND BE PATIENT, SAID NYERERE. INCI-
DENTALLY, HE ADDED, HE HAD FOUND THE ETHIOPIANS TO BE MUCH
IMPRESSED WITH AMBASSADOR CHAPIN AND TO TRUST HIM. TO ENCOURAGE
THIS, NYERERE HAD DELIBERATELY AND OBVIOUSLY EXCHANGED VIEWS
WITH THE AMBASSADOR DURING HIS VISIT TO ADDIS.

7. NYERERE HAD ALSO TOLD MENGISTU UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT HE MUST
FIND A WAY TO GET ALONG WITH THE US. IT WAS A GREAT POWER AND
ETHIOPIA HAD TO LEARN TO LIVE WITH IT. ETHIOPIAN SOCIALISM WAS
NOT ANTI-AMERICAN AS SUCH. MENGISTU AND HIS COLLEAGUES SHOULD
STOP TRYING TO SOUND LIKE RUSSIANS. FURTHER, THE STRONGEST OF
THE ERITREAN MOVEMENTS, THE EPLF, SAID NYERERE, WAS SOCIALIST.
MENGISTU WOULD EMBARRASS ALL HIS SOCIALIST COLLEAGUES IF HE
INSISTED ON DESTROYING IT UTTERLY.

8. SUDANESE PROPAGANDA AGAINST ETHIOPIA HAD STOPPED, NYERERE
REPORTED, AND THE TIME WAS RIPE FOR NIMEIRI AND MENGISTU TO SIT
DOWN TOGETHER. NYERERE HAD RECOMMENDED THAT THEY DO SO IN
SIERRA LEONE SINCE THAT HAD ALREADY BEEN SUGGESTED, BUT, IF
THAT WASN'T ACCEPTABLE TO EITHER, HE HAD TOLD BOTH THAT HE WOULD

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BE PREPARED TO HOST A MEETING IN DAR ES SALAAM.

9. I THANKED NYERERE FOR HIS FILL-IN ON THE ETHIOPIA-SUDAN PROBLEM, OBSERVING THAT I HOPED MENGISTU WOULD BE ABLE TO FIND THE NICE BALANCE BETWEEN STRENGTH AND CONCILIATION. NYERERE OPINED THAT HE WOULD. MENGISTU, NYERERE THOUGHT, WAS NOT INTERESTED IN GENOCIDE. NYERERE WOULD LET USG KNOW HOW THINGS CAME OUT AND WOULD ASK FOR OUR HELP IF NEEDED.

10. COMMENT: NYERERE MAY BE PUTTING A BIT OF A GLOSS ON HIS ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN KHARTOUM AND ADDIS. HE DOES NOT IN FACT SEEM TO HAVE GOTTEN MUCH OUT OF MENGISTU, AND HIS READY ACCEPT-ANCE OF THE THESIS THAT THE ETHIOPIANS MUST BE ALLOWED TO KILL SOME MORE ERITREANS BEFORE THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO NEGOTIATE
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WITH THEM IS LESS THAN INSPIRING. HOWEVER, HE SEEMS TO BE GENUINELY DEVOTED TO A CONCILIATION EFFORT AND CONVINCED OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE ETHIOPIANS' DEVELOPING BETTER RELATIONS WITH THE US.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, NEGOTIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978DARES03151
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780304-0860
Format: TEL
From: DAR ES SALAAM
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780724/aaaaauin.tel
Line Count: 141
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 75c7676d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1899482
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ETHIOPIA: NYERERE\'S COMMENTS
TAGS: PEPR, PINS, MOPS, ET, SU, TZ, (NYERERE, JULIUS K)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/75c7676d-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014